

PREFACE:

The Communist Manifesto was written as the official plan for the Communist League, a workers' group that started in Germany but later included members from other countries. Before 1848, with strict political rules in Europe, the League had to operate in secret. At a meeting in London in late 1847, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels were asked to create a clear guide for the group. They finished writing it in German by January 1848, just before a major revolution broke out in France in February.

The Manifesto was quickly translated into French and published in Paris before another uprising in June 1848. The first English version, translated by Helen Macfarlane, came out in 1850 in a magazine called *The Red Republican*. Danish and Polish editions followed.

After the failed workers' uprising in Paris in June 1848 (the first big clash between workers and business owners), the workers' movement lost momentum. For a time, politics became a fight only between wealthy groups, while workers were pushed to the sidelines. Governments cracked down hard on any worker protests. In Germany, police raided the Communist League's headquarters in Cologne, arresting its leaders. After 18 months in jail, they were put on trial in late 1852. Seven were sentenced to prison, and the League disbanded.

For a while, it seemed like the Manifesto would fade into obscurity. But as workers regained strength in later years, its ideas spread worldwide, becoming a cornerstone of the global labor movement.

When workers in Europe regained strength to challenge the wealthy, they formed the International Workers' Group (First International) in 1864. Its goal was to unite workers across Europe and America. But since different worker groups had different ideas, the International couldn't start by fully using the Communist Manifesto's principles. Instead, Marx wrote a flexible plan to include everyone—like British unions, French worker groups favoring small businesses, and German labor reformers.

Marx believed workers would grow wiser by working together and facing challenges. Battles against unfair bosses—even losses—taught them that old strategies (like relying on charity or small reforms) weren't enough. Over time, they began to see the bigger picture: true freedom required systemic change.

By 1874, when the International disbanded, workers had transformed. Outdated ideas in France and Germany faded. Even cautious British unions, though no longer part of the International, started warming to socialism. By 1887, their leaders admitted, "Socialism doesn't scare us anymore!" The Manifesto's core ideas—unity and equality—had spread worldwide, uniting workers in a shared fight for fairness.

The Communist Manifesto became popular again over time. Since 1850, the original German version was reprinted in Switzerland, England, and the U.S. The

first English translation in America came out in New York in 1872, published in a newspaper called Woodhull and Claflin's Weekly. From there, a French version was created in another New York paper. Later, more English translations (though some were incomplete) appeared in the U.S. and England.

Around the world, the Manifesto spread further:

- The first Russian version, translated by Bakunin, was printed in Switzerland in 1863.
- A second Russian edition by Vera Zasulich (a brave revolutionary) came out in 1882.
- Danish and updated French translations appeared in 1885 and 1886.
- A Spanish version followed in 1886.

In Germany alone, it was reprinted at least 12 times! Even an Armenian translation was planned, but the publisher got scared to print Marx's name, and the translator refused to take credit.

The Manifesto's journey mirrors the growth of the global workers' movement. Today, it's the most widely read socialist text, uniting millions of workers from Siberia to California.

When the Communist Manifesto was written in 1847, it couldn't be called a "Socialist" manifesto. Back then, "socialists" were two groups:

Dreamers like the followers of Robert Owen in England or Charles Fourier in France. They imagined perfect societies but had no real plan to get there. Their ideas were fading and didn't connect with workers.

Fixers who claimed they could solve poverty and injustice without challenging wealthy business owners. These people often looked down on workers and asked rich "educated" folks for help.

Meanwhile, communism was different. It was a working-class movement. Workers who saw that voting or small reforms weren't enough began demanding total change—a new society where they controlled their lives. Early communists, like Étienne Cabet in France or Wilhelm Weitling in Germany, had rough ideas but understood the core truth: workers must free themselves.

The authors chose "Communist" for the Manifesto because they agreed: Workers, not rich helpers, must lead the fight. Socialism back then was seen as "polite" and middle-class. Communism was bold, radical, and unapologetically for workers.

The Manifesto's big idea came from Marx: History is driven by class fights over money and power. In every era—from ancient tribes to modern factories—how people produce goods (farming, manufacturing, etc.) shapes society. Those who control production (kings, nobles, business owners) exploit everyone else. Today, workers are the last oppressed class. To win freedom, they must overthrow the

wealthy and end all exploitation forever. This won't just help workers—it'll free all people from unfair systems.

Why This Matters:

Past revolutions replaced one oppressive system (feudalism) with another (capitalism). Workers' victory would end this cycle.

Marx argued that workers, united globally, hold the power to create a society where no group rules over others.

The Manifesto wasn't just a protest—it was a call to rewrite history.

Engels believed the Manifesto's core idea—that history is shaped by class struggles—would change how we understand society, just as Darwin's theory of evolution changed biology. Both Marx and Engels had been working toward this idea separately for years. Engels' book *The Condition of the Working Class in England* showed his own progress, but when they reunited in 1845, Marx had already refined the idea into clear, powerful terms.

In 1872, Marx and Engels looked back and wrote:

The Manifesto's main ideas are still true, even after 25 years.

Some details, like specific revolutionary steps, might need updating. For example, after the Paris Commune (1871), workers learned they couldn't just take over the existing government—they had to build a new one.

Their critiques of older socialist writings only cover up to 1847, so newer ideas aren't included. Political alliances listed in the Manifesto are outdated, since many old parties no longer exist.

But they refused to rewrite it. The Manifesto is a snapshot of history—a document of its time. Its lessons remain vital, but workers must adapt its principles to new conditions.

MANIFESTO OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

By

KARL MARX and FREDERICK ENGELS.

A ghost is haunting Europe—the ghost of Communism. All the powerful groups in old Europe have joined together to try to chase this ghost away. Leaders like the Pope and the Czar, along with other important people and secret police, have teamed up.

Every group that opposes the government is called communist by those in power. And even the groups in power call each other communist when they fight. This shows two things:

1. Everyone in Europe already sees Communism as a strong force.
2. It is time for Communists to share their ideas, their goals, and their plans with the whole world.

That is why Communists from many countries met in London and wrote this statement. It will be shared in English, French, German, Italian, Flemish, and Danish.

I: BOURGEOIS AND PROLETARIANS.

All the history of society is the story of fights between classes. Free people and slaves, rich and poor, masters and workers—all these groups always fought each other. Their fights were sometimes hidden and sometimes open. Each fight ended either with a big change in society or with the ruin of both sides.

In the past, society was divided into many layers with different ranks. In ancient Rome, there were patricians, knights, plebeians, and slaves. In the Middle Ages, there were feudal lords, vassals, guild-masters, journeymen, apprentices, and serfs. Even within these groups, there were smaller ranks.

Modern society, which grew from feudal times, still has class conflicts. It has only created new classes, new ways to oppress people, and new kinds of struggles. Our time, the time of the wealthy class, has one clear feature: society is splitting into two main enemy groups—the wealthy class and the workers.

From the serfs of the Middle Ages came the citizens of the first towns. From these citizens, the early wealthy class developed.

America was discovered and ships sailed around the Cape. This opened up new land for the rising rich merchants. The markets in India and China, the colonization of America, trade with the colonies, and the growth of money and goods gave trade, sea travel, and industry a boost like never before. This boost helped change the weak feudal society very quickly.

The old feudal system of making things was controlled by small groups called guilds. This system could no longer meet the growing needs of the new markets, so

a manufacturing system took its place. The guild leaders were pushed aside by the rising middle class of manufacturers. The way work was split among different guilds disappeared and was replaced by the division of work within each workshop.

Meanwhile, markets kept growing and demand kept rising. Even small-scale manufacturing was not enough. Then steam power and machines changed how things were made. The small-scale manufacture was replaced by giant modern industry. This new industry was led by rich factory owners, who managed large groups of workers—the modern rich merchants.

Modern industry created a world market, which began with the discovery of America. This new market helped trade, sea travel, and land communication grow a lot. As these things grew, the middle class (wealthy class) also grew, gained more money, and replaced the old classes from the Middle Ages.

We can see that the modern middle class is the result of a long history of change—a series of shifts in how things are made and traded. Each step in its growth came with more political power.

At first, the middle class was an oppressed group under feudal lords. Later, it became an armed, self-governing group in medieval communities—sometimes as an independent urban republic (as in Italy and Germany) and sometimes as the taxable "third estate" under a monarchy (as in France). During the age of manufacturing, it acted as a balance against the nobility in both semi-feudal and absolute monarchies. Finally, with modern industry and a world market, the middle class has taken full political control in the modern state. The government today is simply a group that manages the common interests of the entire middle class.

The wealthy class has always played a very revolutionary role. Wherever it has taken control, it has ended the old feudal, strict ways of ruling. It has cruelly torn apart the messy feudal bonds that once tied people to their so-called "natural superiors." Now, the only connection between people is their own self-interest and simple cash payments. It has drowned the highest joys of deep religious feeling, brave knightly spirit, and gentle sentiment in the cold water of selfish calculation. It has changed how we see personal worth by turning it into a price. Instead of many guaranteed freedoms, it has set up one rule—free trade. In short, instead of hiding exploitation behind religious or political ideas, it has replaced it with open, shameless, and brutal exploitation.

The wealthy class has taken away the special honor from every job that was once respected and admired. It has turned the doctor, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, and the scientist into paid workers.

It has also pulled away the emotional cover from the family and turned family ties into just money matters.

The wealthy class has shown how the strong, brutal displays of power in the Middle Ages—which some still admire—were matched by great laziness. It was the first to show what human work can achieve. It has done wonders far greater than

the Egyptian pyramids, Roman aqueducts, or Gothic cathedrals, and it has led adventures that outshine all the earlier mass movements and crusades.

The wealthy class cannot exist without always changing the tools and ways of making things. In the past, older working classes had to keep their methods the same to survive. Now, constant changes in how things are made and in society bring non-stop uncertainty and unrest. Old, fixed ways—with all their long-held beliefs—are swept away, and even new ways change before they can become permanent. Everything once solid melts away, and even what is sacred loses its meaning. People are forced to see their true living conditions and how they relate to one another.

The need for ever-growing markets pushes the wealthy class all over the world. They must settle everywhere and build connections everywhere. By using the world market, the wealthy class has made production and buying things a worldwide activity. This change has upset those who want to keep the old national ways. All the old, established national industries are being destroyed every day. They are replaced by new industries that use raw materials not only from local sources but from the farthest regions, and their products are sold all over the globe.

Instead of old needs that were met by local goods, there are now new needs that require products from distant lands. Instead of local and national isolation, there is now trade in every direction, and nations depend on each other. The same is true for ideas and culture. The creative works of individual nations become shared by everyone. It is harder for any nation to remain narrow-minded, and many national and local writings come together to form a world literature.

The rich business class, by quickly improving tools for making things and by making communication much easier, brings even the most primitive nations into civilization. The low prices of its goods work like strong weapons that break down walls and force even a deep dislike of foreigners to end. It forces all nations, or else they will disappear, to use its way of making things; it forces them to bring what it calls civilization into their lands—that is, to become like it. In short, it makes a world that looks just like itself.

The rich business class has put the countryside under the rule of the towns. It has built huge cities and grown the number of people living in towns compared to the country, saving many people from the old ways of rural life. Just as it has made the country depend on the towns, it has made primitive and partly primitive countries depend on civilized ones—countries of farmers on countries of rich business people, the East on the West.

The wealthy class keeps making things more concentrated. It gathers people in one place, puts the tools and factories in one center, and makes most property belong to a few people. Because of this, governments also became more centralized. Small regions that once had their own interests, laws, governments,

and taxes were joined together into one nation with one government, one set of laws, one common interest, one border, and one customs system.

In just about one hundred years, the wealthy class has created far more power to produce goods than all earlier generations combined. They have put nature to work for humans using machines, chemicals in industry and farming, steam navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, clearing large lands for farming, building canals in rivers, and gathering many people together. No one in the past had even imagined that human work could create so much power.

We see, then, that the tools and methods for making and trading goods—the foundation of the wealthy class—were first made in feudal society. But at a certain point, the old feudal ways of farming and manufacturing, the feudal rules about property, could no longer work with the new, strong power to produce. They became like heavy chains holding progress back. They had to be broken apart; they were broken apart.

Free competition took the place of the old system. New social and political rules were made for free competition, and the capitalist class gained power in money and politics. A similar change is happening today.

Modern capitalist society—with its ways of making things, trading, and owning property—has built huge tools for production and exchange. It is like a sorcerer who can no longer control the dark forces he has summoned.

For many years, the history of industry and trade has been the story of modern productive power fighting against the old ways of making and exchanging things. Those old rules were what allowed the wealthy class to exist and rule.

We can see this in the business crises that keep coming back. Each time, they put the whole capitalist society at risk. During these crises, many products and even much of the productive power are destroyed over and over.

In these times, an “epidemic” of overproduction breaks out—a situation that, in the past, would have seemed very strange. Society suddenly falls into chaos. It seems as if a famine or a huge war has cut off all supplies. Industry and trade look as if they have been destroyed. And why does this happen?

It happens because there is too much production, too many supplies, too much industry, and too much trade. The productive forces in society no longer help to grow capitalist property. Instead, they have become too strong for the old rules, and when they break free, they cause disorder and put capitalist property at risk.

The rules of capitalist society are too small to hold all the wealth that is created. So how does the wealthy class overcome these crises? One way is by forcefully destroying a large part of the productive power. The other way is by taking over new markets and using the old ones more fully. In other words, they clear the way for even bigger and more harmful crises, while also reducing the ways to stop these crises.

The very tools that the wealthy class used to overthrow feudalism are now being turned against it. But the wealthy class hasn’t just created the weapons of its

downfall—it has also created the people who will wield them: the modern working class, the workers.

As capital grows, so does the proletariat—a class of workers who can only survive if they find work, and who only find work if their labor generates more capital. These workers are treated as commodities, subject to the unpredictable tides of the market, just like any other product.

With the rise of machines and the division of labor, the worker's job has lost its uniqueness and any sense of personal fulfillment. He becomes nothing more than an extension of the machine, performing the simplest, most repetitive tasks. As a result, the cost of keeping a worker alive is reduced to the bare minimum—just enough to sustain him and allow the next generation of workers to be born.

And because the price of labor is tied to its cost of production, wages decline as work becomes more dehumanizing. The more machines and division of labor advance, the harder the burden becomes—whether through longer hours, greater workloads in less time, or machines that demand faster and more exhausting labor.

Modern industry has transformed the small workshop of the independent craftsman into the vast factory of the industrial capitalist. Here, workers are not just laborers—they are soldiers in an industrial army, commanded by a strict hierarchy of overseers, foremen, and managers. They are not only subjugated by the capitalist class and the capitalist state but are also enslaved by the relentless demands of machines, supervisors, and, above all, the capitalist factory owner. The more openly this system declares profit as its sole objective, the more oppressive and unbearable it becomes.

As modern industry advances, the need for skill, effort, and physical strength in labor decreases. In turn, men's jobs are increasingly replaced by those of women and children. Age and gender distinctions lose their social significance in the working class—everyone is reduced to a tool of production, valued only by how expensive they are to maintain.

Even after the factory owner has extracted his due and paid the worker his meager wages, the worker is immediately set upon by the rest of the wealthy class—the landlord demanding rent, the shopkeeper inflating prices, and the pawnbroker waiting to strip him of what little he has left. The cycle of exploitation never ends.

As Modern Industry advances, the lower strata of the middle class—the small shopkeepers, artisans, and peasants—are gradually pushed into the ranks of the workers. Their small capital proves insufficient to compete with large-scale industrial production, and their once-valued specialized skills become obsolete due to new methods of production. In this way, the workers are continuously expanded, drawing members from all social classes.

From the moment the proletariat emerges, its struggle against the wealthy class begins. Initially, individual workers resist exploitation. Over time, these struggles grow into collective actions—first within individual factories, then across

entire trades and industries. However, in these early stages, the workers do not yet recognize the broader system as their true enemy. Instead, they direct their frustration at the instruments of production themselves. They destroy imported goods that threaten their jobs, smash machinery that replaces their labor, and even set factories on fire in an attempt to turn back the clock to the old ways of work from the Middle Ages.

But history does not move backward. The struggle of the workers will evolve beyond these initial acts of desperation into a more organized, conscious movement against the conditions that keep them in servitude.

At this stage, the working class is still fragmented, scattered across different regions, and divided by competition among themselves. When they do unite, it is not of their own accord but as a result of the wealthy class mobilizing them for its own political battles. The workers, in these early struggles, often fought not against the wealthy class itself but against its enemies—such as the remnants of absolute monarchy, landowners, and the old ruling classes. As a result, every victory won in these struggles ultimately benefits the wealthy class rather than the workers.

However, as the industry advances, so do the workers. Their numbers grow, they become more concentrated in cities and factories, and with that concentration comes an increasing awareness of their collective strength. The distinctions between different kinds of laborers blur as machines standardize work, reducing wages to a common low level. Meanwhile, the cutthroat competition between capitalists leads to economic crises, making workers' wages more unstable and their jobs more precarious.

These conditions inevitably push workers to band together. They form trade unions, strike to maintain wages, and build permanent organizations to prepare for future conflicts. Over time, isolated skirmishes escalate into organized resistance. Riots and uprisings erupt sporadically, signaling the growing realization that their struggle is not just against individual employers but against the entire system that exploits them.

The victories of the working class are often temporary, but their true significance lies in strengthening the unity of the workers. Each struggle, whether won or lost, contributes to an ever-expanding network of solidarity among workers. The rapid development of modern industry, particularly the advancements in communication and transportation, accelerates this process. Railways, newspapers, and telegraphs connect workers across different regions, allowing them to transform scattered, local conflicts into a unified national class struggle.

However, this unity is constantly threatened by competition among workers themselves. Wages, job security, and working conditions remain unstable, creating divisions within the workers. Yet, despite these setbacks, the workers' movement continues to rise stronger after each defeat. The workers learned to exploit the internal conflicts among the wealthy class, sometimes securing legislative victories such as England's Ten Hours Act, which limited working hours. These victories,

though small in the grand scheme, demonstrate the growing power of the working class and its ability to influence political systems.

The more the workers organize themselves, the more it forces recognition of its demands, proving that class struggle is not just economic but inherently political.

All the fights between the old classes help the working class grow. The rich class is always fighting. First, they fight with the aristocrats. Later, they fight with parts of their own group that do not support the new industry. They also fight with rich people from other countries. In all these fights, they call on the working class for help, pulling them into politics.

The rich class also gives the working class ideas about politics. In other words, they give workers the tools to fight back. Also, many people in the ruling classes are forced into the working class by new industries, or they lose their old way of life. These changes give the working class new ideas and chances to move forward.

At last, when the fight between classes becomes very serious, the old ruling class breaks apart. A small group leaves and joins the revolution, the group that holds the future. Just like some nobles joined the rich class before, now some rich people join the working class. This is especially true for those rich thinkers who understand history as a whole.

Out of all the groups that face the rich class today, only the working class is truly revolutionary. The other groups shrink and eventually vanish because of modern industry. The working class is the unique result of modern industry.

The lower middle class, small manufacturers, shopkeepers, artisans, and peasants all fight against the rich class to keep their place as parts of the middle class. They are not really revolutionary; they are conservative. In fact, they even try to turn back the clock. If they act in a revolutionary way, it is only because they are about to join the working class. They fight for their future, not for who they are now, and they give up their own views to join the working class.

The "dangerous class"—the wasted mass from the lowest parts of old society—may sometimes be swept into the movement by a working-class revolution. But the way they live makes them more likely to be used as a tool by those who want to stop change.

In the world of workers, the old way of life is almost overwhelmed. The worker owns no property; his relationship with his wife and children is nothing like the family life of rich people. Modern factory work and the control of money have taken away every sign of his own national identity—whether he lives in England, France, America, or Germany. For him, law, right and wrong, and religion are just ideas of rich people that hide rich people's own interests.

All the old classes that once had power tried to keep it by making everyone follow their own rules about owning things. Workers cannot take charge of society's power to make things unless they end the old ways of owning things. They have

nothing to protect for themselves; their job is to break all the old guarantees that keep personal property safe.

Every movement in history before was made by small groups or for the benefit of small groups. The workers' movement is a clear and free movement of the large majority, for the benefit of the large majority. The working class, which is at the bottom of our society, cannot get moving without completely shaking up all the higher parts of society.

At first, the fight between workers and the rich class is a fight within each country. Each country's workers must first settle their issues with their own rich people.

We can see that workers go through different stages. At first, there is a hidden civil war inside society. Then, this war becomes an open revolution. When the rich class is overthrown by force, the workers take control.

So far, every society has been built on the fight between those who oppress and those who are oppressed. To keep a group down, the oppressors give them just enough to stay as slaves.

Under serfdom, a serf could join the community. Also, small rich people under feudal rule grew into the rich class. But modern workers, instead of rising with new industry, sink lower and lower. They become poor, and poverty grows faster than the number of people or the wealth.

This shows that the rich class is no longer fit to rule society or force their way of life on everyone. They cannot even keep their slaves from falling deeper into poverty—they must feed the worker instead of being fed by his work. In other words, society cannot live under the rich class any longer; they do not fit with what society needs.

To exist and have power, the rich class must build and grow money. But money grows only with wage work. Wage work is based only on workers competing with each other. As industry grows—pushed on by the rich class—workers who were once alone because of competition are forced to work together. This change in modern industry breaks the very base on which the rich class makes and takes products. In other words, what the rich class creates ends up digging their own grave. Their fall and the victory of the working class are sure to happen.

II: PROLETARIANS AND COMMUNISTS.

Communists are not a separate group fighting against other worker parties. They don't have different goals from the working class as a whole. Instead, they're part of the same fight. What makes Communists different is two things.

First, in every country, they remind workers that their struggles are connected. A worker in France or England isn't just fighting their own bosses—they're part of a global fight for all workers. Second, no matter what stage the battle is in, Communists keep the big picture in mind. They focus on the final goal: freeing workers everywhere from the control of business owners.

Communists are like the leaders of the working-class movement. They're the most determined part of the fight, always pushing others forward. They also understand the path to victory better than anyone else. They know how the struggle will unfold, what needs to happen, and what the world will look like when workers finally win.

Communists want the same things as other worker groups: to unite workers into a strong class, take down the power of the wealthy, and let workers control the government. Their ideas aren't made-up theories—they come from real fights between workers and business owners happening right now.

Communists don't want to abolish all property. Throughout history, property rules have changed. For example, the French Revolution got rid of old feudal land systems (where nobles controlled everything) and replaced them with business-owned property. But today's business-owned property lets a small wealthy group exploit workers. Communists aim to end this unfair system, not personal belongings.

Communists are often accused of wanting to abolish all private property—like the tools a farmer owns or the house a worker builds with their own hands. But that's not the case. The property we aim to abolish is not the kind earned by personal labor. That kind of property (small shops, craftsmen's tools, family farms) is already disappearing, crushed by big factories and wealthy business owners.

What we oppose is modern capitalist property: the factories, machines, and wealth that bosses use to control workers. When you work for wages, do you gain property? No. Your labor only builds more wealth for the capitalist, who then uses it to exploit more workers. Today's property system pits bosses against workers.

Think about it: A capitalist's power isn't just personal—it's built by society. Factories, railroads, and machines aren't made by one person. They're created by many workers together. Yet the profits flow to a few. Capital is a shared force, but it's controlled by those who don't labor. Communists ask: Why should a system that depends on everyone's work reward only the wealthy?

Capital isn't just money or tools owned by one person—it's a power built by society. When this shared power (like factories or railroads) becomes owned by

everyone, it doesn't mean your personal belongings (like your house or clothes) get taken away. It means the system of ownership changes. Instead of a few bosses controlling everything, resources are shared by all, and the divide between rich and workers disappears.

Now, think about wages. Bosses pay workers the bare minimum—just enough to survive and keep working. Workers earn barely enough to eat, sleep, and show up the next day. Communists don't want to take away what little workers earn to survive. We want to end the cruel system where workers only exist to make the rich richer.

In today's world, your work is just a tool to grow the wealth of bosses. In a fair society, the wealth and technology built by past work would be used to improve your life—better homes, schools, and healthcare for all.

In capitalist society, the past controls the present—wealth and systems built long ago decide how people live today. But in a communist society, the present shapes the future. Workers' needs and lives would matter more than old money or power.

Under capitalism, money and corporations act like they have their own "rights" and freedom, while real people—workers—have little say. Bosses call this "freedom," but it's really just the freedom for the wealthy to control everything. When communists talk about ending this unfair system, the rich panic. They claim we're destroying "freedom," but their idea of freedom is just their freedom to exploit others—like selling goods cheaply while paying workers starvation wages.

Think about it: The wealthy praise "free trade," but that's only because it's better than the strict rules of the Middle Ages. Communists don't want to go backward. We want to move forward to a system where buying and selling isn't rigged to enrich a few.

You accuse us of wanting to abolish all private property. But in your world, 9 out of 10 people own nothing. The only reason the wealthy have property is because the rest of us don't. We're not taking away your home or your savings. We're challenging a system where a tiny group hoards factories, land, and resources while most people struggle to survive.

When workers can no longer be turned into a source of profit—when a person can't hoard power by owning factories or land—the wealthy claim "freedom dies." But whose freedom? Theirs. The freedom to profit while others struggle. Communists don't strip people of the right to earn or own what they need. We strip the power to exploit.

Critics argue, "If no one owns property, no one will work!" Yet in today's world, those who work hardest own the least, while those who own the most rarely labor. If laziness doomed societies, capitalism would've collapsed long ago. The truth? Work isn't the issue—it's who controls the rewards. Without bosses siphoning wealth, work could uplift everyone, not just a few.

Critics attack communism not just for how it shares resources but also for how it shares ideas and culture. To the wealthy class, ending their control over property and culture feels like the end of all progress. But the “culture” they defend isn’t for everyone—it’s designed to turn most people into obedient workers, trained to serve machines and bosses.

Stop judging communism by your wealthy class’s ideas of “freedom” or “law.” Your rules and values aren’t universal truths—they’re tools to protect your power. Just like kings and nobles once claimed their systems were natural and eternal, you pretend your way of life is the only way. You agree feudalism and ancient empires fell, but you refuse to see your own system is just as temporary.

Every ruling class in history—slave owners, feudal lords, and now business owners—insists their rules are “common sense.” But your laws and freedoms only exist to keep your wealth safe. When workers challenge this, you panic, just as past rulers did. The truth? Systems change. What once seemed unshakable—like kings owning land—fades away. Your turn will come.

“Abolish the family?!” Even critics who hate the wealthy class gasp at this idea. But let’s ask: What is the “family” today? For the rich, it’s a way to pass down money and property—parents control kids to keep their wealth safe. For workers, though, poverty tears families apart. Parents can’t protect their children; kids are forced to work or left hungry.

The wealthy’s perfect family—with inheritances and private tutors—only exists because of their money. When that system ends, their version of “family” ends too.

Yes, we want to stop parents (forced by poverty) from sending kids to factories instead of school. Guilty as charged.

You cry, “Communists destroy sacred family bonds by replacing parents with schools!” But your schools already teach kids to obey bosses, not think freely. We don’t want to erase families—we want schools that lift up all kids, not just the rich. Education shouldn’t brainwash workers to accept their place.

The wealthy act like their version of “family” is holy, but it’s built on the same greed that keeps workers poor. Break the system, and families can be about love, not property.

Critics attack communism using religion, philosophy, or fancy theories. But these arguments aren’t worth much. Think about it: When people’s lives change—like how they work, live, or interact—their beliefs change too. If your family suddenly became rich, wouldn’t you see the world differently?

History shows that ideas shift as societies do. The “normal” beliefs of any era are just what the powerful people say is normal. For example:

- Ancient religions faded when Christianity took over as the Roman Empire crumbled.

- Feudal lords lost power to business owners, and “faith” gave way to “reason” in the 1700s.

When people talk about “revolutionary ideas,” they’re really saying old ways are dying, and new ones are being born. “Religious freedom” and “free thought” sound noble, but they’re just reflections of a society obsessed with competition—even in ideas. Just like businesses fight for customers, religions and philosophies fight for followers.

Communists argue: Don’t waste time debating old beliefs. Focus on changing the unfair systems that shape those beliefs. When workers control their lives, new ideas—fairer, kinder ones—will rise naturally.

Critics cry, “Communism destroys eternal truths like freedom and justice! It wipes out religion and morality instead of renewing them!” But let’s be honest: What they call “eternal” truths are just ideas that served the powerful in every era.

Think about it: For thousands of years, society split into rulers and the ruled. Kings called their power “divine.” Slaveowners called slavery “natural.” Business owners today call wage labor “freedom.” These “truths” changed shape with each ruling class. So-called “justice” in ancient Rome (where emperors ruled) looked nothing like “justice” under kings or today’s CEOs.

Communism doesn’t abolish “morality” or “freedom”—it strips away the lies that let the wealthy control what those words mean. When workers overthrow a system built on exploitation, old ideas must crumble too. You can’t have new wine in old bottles.

The wealthy act shocked, but their outrage is fake. They cling to “eternal truths” because those ideas keep them rich. Feudal lords once claimed their power was “God’s will.” Business owners now preach “free markets” as sacred. But when workers rise, we’ll define freedom for ourselves—not as the right to exploit, but the right to live.

So yes, communism will break from the past. Just as steam engines ended feudalism, workers’ power will end the myths that prop up bosses. The real “eternal truth”? Every ruling class falls. Their turn is next.

The first goal of the workers’ revolution is for the working class to take political power—to win control of the government and become the new leaders. Once in charge, workers will slowly take control of all factories, land, and wealth from the wealthy class. They’ll put these resources under the control of the people, organized as a new kind of state led by workers. The aim is to boost technology, farms, and industries as fast as possible to improve life for everyone.

At first, this will require strong actions—like taking over big corporations or limiting the power of bosses. Critics will call these steps unfair or impossible, but they’re necessary to break the old system’s grip. Each bold move will reveal more cracks in the old ways, forcing even bigger changes until the whole economy is rebuilt for the people, not profit.

Of course, how this happens will depend on the country. A place with factories and cities might focus on nationalizing industries. A farming nation might start by redistributing land. But the core truth remains: Workers must unite, take power, and rewrite the rules to serve their needs, not the wealthy few.

The old system won't vanish gently. Just like you can't fix a broken machine with Band-Aids, you can't fix a society built on greed without tearing out its roots. Workers will face resistance, but each step forward—no matter how messy—lays the path to a world where labor serves life, not wealth.

First, land would no longer be owned by landlords. Rent from farms or properties would fund schools, hospitals, and roads—not private profits. The richest would pay higher taxes, with the wealthy taxed far more than the poor. Inheritance—passing down fortunes to heirs—would end, breaking the cycle of generational wealth that keeps power in few hands.

Those who rebel or flee to sabotage the new system would lose their property, ensuring no one can undermine the people's progress. Banks and credit would be controlled by the state, creating a public bank to fund projects that benefit everyone, not shareholders. Trains, roads, and communication networks would become public goods, run to connect communities, not to enrich tycoons.

Factories and industries would expand under public ownership, with idle land turned into farms or housing. Everyone would contribute labor fairly, with teams organized to tackle big tasks—like rebuilding infrastructure or growing food. Cities and rural areas would blend over time, with factories spread evenly to end overcrowded slums and deserted villages.

Children would attend free schools that teach skills for life, not just factory work. No more child labor—instead, education would mix classroom learning with hands-on training, preparing youth to build a better world.

These steps, harsh to some, aim to dismantle a system rigged for the wealthy. Critics will howl, but history shows half-measures fail. When workers lead, the rules must serve the many, not the few. The path won't be smooth, but it's the only way to bury an old world choking on greed and birth a new one rooted in shared dignity.

Once the working class wins power and reorganizes society, the old divisions between rich and poor will fade. Factories, farms, and resources will no longer be controlled by a wealthy few but by the people as a whole. When this happens, governments won't act as tools for bosses to control workers—because there are no bosses or workers anymore.

First, workers must unite as a class to overthrow the wealthy and take control. But by dismantling the unfair systems that let one group exploit another, they'll erase the very idea of "classes." Workers won't need to rule as a class because there will be no one left to oppress.

Imagine a world where no one is held back by poverty or power. Instead of a few hoarding wealth, everyone contributes and shares. Your freedom to learn,

create, and thrive won't threaten mine—it will make my life better too. A society built not on competition, but on solidarity: "The freedom of each person becomes the foundation for the freedom of all."

III: SOCIALIST AND COMMUNIST LITERATURE.

Section I: Reactionary Socialism Feudal Socialism

- *Feudal Socialism*

Because of their place in history, the aristocracies (upper-class) wrote pamphlets about society. In the 1830s, during the French revolution of July and the English reform movement, these aristocracies were once again beaten by the hateful upstart.

After that, a real political fight was not possible. Only a battle of writings remained. But even in literature, the old cries of the restoration period no longer worked.

To gain sympathy, the aristocracy had to forget about their own interests and blame the rich class for the suffering of the working people.

Thus, the aristocracy took revenge by making fun of their new master and whispering dark warnings of a coming disaster.

This is how feudal socialism began: half sadness and half mockery; half a reminder of the past and half a threat for the future. Sometimes, their bitter, clever, and sharp words hit the rich class hard, but it always looked silly because they could not understand the march of modern history.

To win the people to their side, the aristocracy waved the workers' alms-bag like a banner. But when the people saw the old feudal coats of arms on their backs, they left, laughing loudly and with disrespect.

One group of French Legitimists and "Young England" showed this scene. When old rulers say that they use people in a different way than the rich class does, they forget that they took advantage of people under very old conditions. When they claim that modern workers never existed under their rule, they ignore that today's rich class grew from the society they built.

They do not hide that their ideas are meant to keep old ways. Their main complaint about the rich class is that under its rule a group is forming that will tear apart the old order of society. They do not only blame the rich class for making workers; they blame it for making workers who are ready to fight for change.

In politics, they use every forceful method against the working class. And in everyday life, even with their fancy words, they lower themselves to grab the easy rewards of industry—trading truth, love, and honor for deals in wool, beet sugar, and potato alcohol. Just as the priest always worked with the landlord, church socialism has always worked with feudal socialism.

It is very easy to mix Christian self-denial with socialism. Hasn't Christianity spoken out against private property, marriage, and the State? Instead, it taught charity, poverty, celibacy, self-denial, monastic life, and the power of the Church.

Christian Socialism is nothing more than the holy water that a priest uses to bless the burning anger of the aristocrat.

- *Petty Bourgeois Socialism*

The old rich rulers were not the only ones ruined by the new rich class. The town merchants and small rich peasants from the Middle Ages came before the new rich class. In countries that are not very advanced, these two groups still live side by side with the new rich class.

In very modern countries, a new group of small rich people has formed. They sometimes act like workers and sometimes like rich people, always changing as part of rich society. But each person in this group is pushed into the working class by competition. As modern industry grows, they see that they will soon vanish as a separate group. They will be replaced in factories, farms, and shops by managers, supervisors, and shopkeepers.

In countries like France, where most people are peasants, writers who supported the working class used the example of peasants and small rich people to criticize rich rule. This is how small rich socialism began. Sismondi led this school of thought in France and England.

This school of Socialism looked very hard at the problems in how things are made today. It showed the false excuses of economists. It clearly proved the bad effects of machines and splitting work into many parts, the way money and land end up in the hands of only a few people, and how making too many goods leads to crises. It also pointed out that small rich people and peasants would eventually fail, that workers would suffer, that work would become chaotic, that wealth would be shared very unfairly, that there would be industrial wars between nations, and that old moral ties, family bonds, and national identities would break apart.

But when it comes to its goals, this kind of Socialism wants either to bring back the old ways of making and trading goods—along with the old rules of owning things and the old society—or to force the new ways of making and trading to work under the old rules. In both cases, it is both backward and unrealistic.

Its final ideas are: having work done by groups like the old guilds and keeping old family rules in farming. In the end, when hard facts cleared away all the false hopes, this form of Socialism ended in a sad failure.

- *German or "True" Socialism*

The Socialist and Communist writings from France came from people fighting against the powerful rich class. These ideas reached Germany when the rich there were just starting to fight against the old feudal rulers.

German thinkers and writers grabbed onto these ideas, but they forgot something important—the problems in France had not moved to Germany with the

books. Because of this, the French ideas lost their real meaning in Germany and became just words on paper.

For German thinkers of the 1700s, the demands of the French Revolution were not about real struggles but about what they called "Practical Reason." They saw what the French revolutionaries wanted as deep, universal truths about human will.

The German writers' main job was to fit these new French ideas into their old way of thinking. Instead of changing their views, they tried to make French ideas match their own philosophy.

This process was like translating a foreign language.

A long time ago, monks would write over old books, replacing ancient writings with stories about Catholic saints. The German writers did something similar but in reverse. Instead of copying the French ideas as they were, they covered them with their own confusing philosophy.

For example, when the French criticized how money worked, German writers called it the "Alienation of Humanity." When the French criticized the government, the Germans wrote about the "Dethronement of the Category of the General."

They gave fancy names to these ideas, calling them things like "Philosophy of Action," "True Socialism," or the "Philosophical Foundation of Socialism."

By doing this, they took all the real meaning out of French Socialist and Communist ideas. Instead of showing the fight between classes, German writers acted like they had risen above it. They claimed to speak for "Truth" and "Human Nature" instead of the working class. But this "Man in general" they talked about wasn't real—it was just an idea from their imagination.

At first, this German Socialism seemed harmless, like a school lesson taken too seriously. But over time, it started to lose its innocent nature.

The German, especially the Prussian, middle class was fighting against the old feudal lords and the king's total power. This was called the liberal movement, and it was getting more serious.

This gave "True Socialism" a chance to step in and attack the political movement. It spoke out against liberalism, voting, free press, competition, laws, and even ideas like liberty and equality. It told the people that they had nothing to gain and everything to lose from this middle-class fight for change.

But German Socialism forgot something important: the French ideas it copied were based on a society where modern businesses and industries already existed. In Germany, people were still fighting to create those things. The middle class was still trying to build the very system that the French had already been criticizing.

The kings and rulers of Germany, along with their priests, teachers, landowners, and government workers, found this "True Socialism" very useful. It became a scary warning to keep the middle class in check. After punishing workers with whippings and bullets for their uprisings, the rulers used this socialism as a sweet but empty promise to calm them down.

While "True" Socialism was being used by the government to fight against the middle class, it also directly served another group—the small-town shopkeepers and craftsmen, known as the German Philistines. This class had existed since the 1500s and kept coming back in different forms. They were the real foundation of Germany's old way of life.

Keeping this class alive meant keeping Germany's outdated system in place. But the rise of big businesses and the growing power of factory workers threatened to wipe them out—big businesses by taking over, and the workers by fighting for change. "True" Socialism pretended to solve both problems at once. It spread like a disease.

It was wrapped in fancy language, filled with flowery phrases, and soaked in overly emotional ideas. This made it very popular among the small business owners who didn't want change. At the same time, German Socialism realized its true purpose—to be the loud and dramatic voice of these people.

It claimed that Germany was the greatest nation and that these small-town shopkeepers were the perfect example of humanity. Every selfish act they committed was given a hidden, noble meaning, twisting the truth. It even went so far as to attack Communism for being too destructive and claimed to be above all class struggles.

Almost every so-called Socialist or Communist book and article in Germany in 1847 belonged to this weak and misleading type of writing.

Section II: Conservative or Bourgeois Socialism.

Some people in the middle class want to fix social problems, but only so they can keep their way of life going. This group includes economists, charity workers, people who want to help the poor, animal rights activists, supporters of sobriety, and all sorts of small-scale reformers. This type of Socialism has even been turned into full theories, like Proudhon's *Philosophie de la Misère*.

These socialistic middle-class people want all the benefits of modern society but none of the struggles that come with it. They wish for a world where the middle class stays in charge but without the poor workers who challenge them. Since the middle class sees the world it rules as the best possible world, this type of Socialism turns that belief into different detailed ideas.

They expect workers to accept their system as the perfect solution and to walk right into a so-called better society. But in reality, they just want workers to stay in their current place while giving up any anger or resistance against the middle class.

Another type of this Socialism, more focused on practical ideas but less organized, tried to convince workers that revolutions wouldn't help them. It argued that changing laws wasn't enough—what really mattered was changing the way people live and work. But when it talked about changing these conditions, it didn't

mean getting rid of the way businesses and factories were run. That could only happen through a revolution. Instead, it pushed for small government fixes that kept the current system in place. These changes didn't actually change the power balance between workers and business owners. At best, they just made the government's job easier and cheaper.

This type of Socialism was most honest when it became nothing more than empty talk. Everything was claimed to be "for the workers' benefit"—free trade, taxes on imports, even prison reform. But in the end, its real message was simple: the rich stay rich, and they pretend it's all to help the workers.

Section III: Critical-Utopian Socialism and Communism.

We're not talking here about the writings that, in every big revolution, have stood up for workers—like those of Babeuf and others.

The first times workers tried to fight for themselves happened during moments of great change, when the old feudal society was falling apart. But these attempts failed. The workers weren't strong enough yet, and the economy hadn't developed in a way that made their freedom possible. The upcoming period, when businesses and industry would grow, had to happen first. Because of this, the first revolutionary ideas from workers took a step backward. They focused on extreme equality and strict, simple living.

The Socialist and Communist ideas of thinkers like St. Simon, Fourier, and Owen came about during this early stage of the struggle between workers and business owners (as discussed in Section I: Bourgeoisie and Proletariat). These thinkers saw the growing conflicts between classes and the signs that society was falling apart. But, since the working class was still young, they saw it as a group without its own leadership or political movement.

As industry grows, so does the conflict between classes. But at the time these thinkers were writing, the economy hadn't yet created the right conditions for workers to gain their freedom. So instead of looking at history and real economic forces, they searched for new social ideas and new rules to shape society in a way that would create these conditions.

They believed that history wasn't something that unfolded on its own but something they could design themselves. Instead of letting workers organize naturally over time, they thought society should be structured according to their own plans. To them, the future was all about spreading and putting their ideas into action.

When making their plans, they saw themselves as helping workers because workers were suffering the most. But they only saw workers in that way—as people who suffered, not as a class that could fight for itself.

Because the class struggle wasn't fully developed yet, and because of their own backgrounds, these Socialists saw themselves as above all conflicts between

classes. They wanted to help everyone, even the richest people. That's why they spoke to all of society, but especially to those in power. They believed that once people understood their ideas, they would surely see them as the best way to create a perfect society.

For this reason, they rejected politics and, most of all, any kind of revolution. Instead, they wanted to reach their goals peacefully. They tried small experiments—though these were bound to fail—and hoped that by setting an example, they could spread their message like a new social Gospel.

Their ideas about the future were more like dreams than real plans. But at a time when workers didn't fully understand their own situation, these dreams matched their early hopes for completely changing society.

These old Socialist and Communist writings attacked unfair parts of society and had useful ideas to teach workers. They suggested big changes like ending the split between cities and farms, abolishing private businesses and wages, and making the government just manage production. But these ideas were like unrealistic dreams because they tried to erase class conflicts (rich vs. poor) before those conflicts were fully understood.

As workers' real struggles grew clearer, these dreamy ideas lost their point. The people who followed these old thinkers became stuck in the past. Instead of joining workers' fights for better conditions, they kept repeating old plans—like building tiny perfect communities ("Home Colonies" or "Little Icaria")—that needed rich people's money to work. Over time, these groups became just like other outdated reformers, blindly believing their ideas could magically fix society without real action.

They even fought against workers organizing strikes or protests, calling such efforts "pointless." For example, Owen's followers in England clashed with the Chartists (workers demanding voting rights), and Fourier's fans in France argued with labor reformers. Their refusal to join actual struggles made them part of the problem, not the solution.

IV: POSITION OF THE COMMUNISTS IN RELATION TO THE VARIOUS EXISTING OPPOSITION PARTIES.

Section II explains how Communists work with existing worker groups, like the Chartists (who fought for workers' voting rights in England) and the Agrarian Reformers (who pushed for fair land rights in America). Communists join these groups to fight for workers' current needs—better pay, safer jobs—while also planning for a future where workers control society.

In France, Communists team up with Social Democrats to challenge wealthy conservatives and reformers. But they don't blindly follow old slogans from past revolutions (like the French Revolution). They question ideas that sound good but don't help workers today.

In Switzerland, Communists support Radicals (reform groups), even though Radicals are a mix of true worker allies and wealthy reformers who don't want big changes. Communists stay alert to these differences while pushing for progress.

In Poland, Communists support the group that fights for land reform for farmers as the first step to freeing the country. This group started the 1846 Kraków uprising against oppressive rulers.

In Germany, Communists work with business owners when they challenge the king's total power or feudal landlords. But they always remind workers that business owners and workers are enemies. When business owners gain power, workers must use new laws and freedoms to fight back. Once Germany's old rulers (like kings and nobles) are defeated, workers must immediately start battling the business owners themselves.

Communists focus on Germany because it's about to have a business-led revolution—like England in the 1600s or France in the 1700s—but under more modern conditions. Germany's workers are stronger and more organized, so this revolution will quickly lead to a workers' revolution to take control next.